

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 3, 2005. Claims 1 to 52 and 101 to 113 are pending in the application, with new Claims 101 to 113 having been added. Claims 1, 2, 22 to 25, 45 to 47 and 49 to 52 are the independent claims herein. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claim 2 was objected to for an informality that has been attended to by amendment as recited above. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 11 to 15, 25, 27, 30, 31, 34 to 38, 42, 43, 45, 47, 48, 49, 51 and 52 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,023,345 (Bloomfield), Claims 3, 9, 10, 26, 32 and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Bloomfield in view of allegedly admitted prior art, Claims 5, 6, 22, 28, 29 and 41 were rejected under § 103(a) over Bloomfield in view of allegedly admitted prior art and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,124,947 (Sco), Claims 16 to 20, 23, 24, 39, 40, 46 and 50 were rejected under § 103(a) over Bloomfield in view of allegedly admitted prior art and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,356,356 (Miller), and Claims 21 and 44 were rejected under § 103(a) over Bloomfield in view of allegedly admitted prior art and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,535,303 (Wolf). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The present invention relates to communication between devices that can transmit/receive e-mail in which image data is attached to the e-mail. In one aspect of the present invention, in a case where communication of electronic mail data with the image data attached thereto is to be performed, a determination is made of a format of the image data corresponding to a destination address by referring to a database. Then,

communication is performed with a destination device corresponding to the destination address of functional information of the format of the image data before the communication of the electronic mail data with the destination device is performed. As a result, by referring to the functional information, the destination device can confirm that the image data contained in the e-mail can be processed properly.

With specific reference to the claims, amended independent Claim 1 is a communication apparatus for communicating electronic mail data by connecting to the Internet, the apparatus comprising determination means for determining a format of image data in correspondence with a destination address by referring to a database, in a case where communication of the electronic mail data with the image data attached thereto is performed, and communication means for performing communication with a destination device corresponding to the destination address of functional information of the format of the image data determined by the determination means before the communication of the electronic mail data with the destination device is performed.

Claims 51 and 52 are method and system claims, respectively, that substantially correspond to Claim 1.

Amended independent Claim 2 includes features along the lines of Claim 1, but more specifically is a communication apparatus comprising first connecting means for connecting to a local area network and a second connecting means for connecting to a wide area network, first communicating means for communicating electronic mail data by connecting to the Internet by one of the first and second connecting means, second communicating means for performing facsimile communication by connecting to the wide area network by the second connecting means, determination means for determining a format of image data in correspondence with a destination address by referring to a

database, in a case where communication of the electronic mail data with the image data attached thereto is performed, and control means for controlling the first communication means so as to perform communication with a destination device corresponding to the destination address or functional information of the format of image data determined by the determination means before the communication of the electronic mail data with the destination address is performed.

Claim 25 is a computer-readable storage medium claim that substantially corresponds to Claim 2.

The applied art, alone or in any permissible combination, is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of independent Claims 1, 2, 25, 51 and 52. More particularly, the applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of determining a format of image data in correspondence with a destination address by referring to a database, in a case where communication of electronic mail data with the image data attached thereto is performed, and performing communication with a destination device corresponding to the destination address or functional information of the determined format of the image data before the communication of the electronic mail data with the destination device is performed.

Bloomfield is merely seen to disclose sending data via a network from facsimile device to an e-mail device, wherein image data in a facsimile format is received and converted into image data in a standard image format so that it can be sent via e-mail. However, Bloomfield is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of determining a format of image data in correspondence with a destination address by referring to a database, in a case where communication of electronic mail data with the image data attached thereto is performed, and performing communication with a

destination device corresponding to the destination address of functional information of the determined format of the image data before the communication of the electronic mail data with the destination device is performed.

The allegedly admitted prior art is not seen to add anything that, when combined with Bloomfield would have rendered the invention obvious. In this regard, the allegedly admitted prior art merely teaches that functional information is communicated in facsimile transmissions, but the allegedly admitted prior art fails to teach anything with regard to the use of functional information in e-mail communications. Thus, the allegedly admitted prior art fails to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of determining a format of image data in correspondence with a destination address by referring to a database, in a case where communication of electronic mail data with the image data attached thereto is performed, and performing communication with a destination device corresponding to the destination address of functional information of the determined format of the image data before the communication of the electronic mail data with the destination device is performed.

Seo, Miller and Wolf are also not seen to add anything that, when combined with Bloomfield and/or the allegedly admitted prior art in any permissible combination, would have rendered the invention obvious. In this regard, Seo is merely seen to disclose the use of retransmissions when a facsimile transmission fails. Miller is merely seen to disclose communicating a facsimile format image via e-mail and then referring to a subscriber database after the e-mail is received. Wolf is merely seen to disclose the use of a G4 facsimile communication. However, none of Seo, Miller or Wolf are seen to add anything that, when combined with Bloomfield or the allegedly admitted prior art, would have resulted in at least the feature of determining a format of image data in

correspondence with a destination address by referring to a database, in a case where communication of electronic mail data with the image data attached thereto is performed, and performing communication with a destination device corresponding to the destination address of functional information of the determined format of the image data before the communication of the electronic mail data with the destination device is performed.

In view of the foregoing, amendments independent Claims 1, 2, 25, 51 and 52, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to be allowable.

In a related aspect of the invention according to Claims 22, 45 and 49, a determination is made of a format of image data in correspondence with a destination address for electronic mail by referring to a database. Then, if a communication error occurs when the electronic mail data is communicated to a destination device corresponding to the destination address, the functional information of the determined format is communicated to the destination device, and electronic mail is sent by attaching image data by one of image standards which the destination device is able to process. With this aspect, if the error occurs during the communication, the image data is converted into a format that the device is able to process and the functional information is communicated.

Referring specifically to the claims, amended independent Claim 22 is a communication apparatus comprising communicating means for communicating electronic mail data with a destination address by connecting to the Internet, determination means for determining a format of image data in correspondence with the destination address by referring to a database, and control means for controlling the communication means so as to perform communication with a destination device corresponding to the destination address of functional information of the format of the image data determined by the determination means, and sending electronic mail by attaching image data by one of image

standards which the destination device is able to process if a communication error occurs when the communicating means communicates electronic mail data with the destination address.

Amended independent Claims 45 and 49 are computer-readable medium and method claims, respectively, that substantially correspond to Claim 22.

The applied art, alone or in any permissible combination, is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 22, 45 and 49. More particularly, the applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of determining a format of image data in correspondence with a destination address by referring to a database, and performing communication with a destination device corresponding to the destination address of functional information of the determined format of the image data, and sending electronic mail by attaching image data by one of image standards which the destination device is able to process if a communication error occurs when electronic mail data is communicated with the destination address.

As stated above, Bloomfield merely converting received facsimile image data into image data in a standard image format so that it can be sent via e-mail. However, Bloomfield is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of determining a format of image data in correspondence with a destination address by referring to a database, and performing communication with a destination device corresponding to the destination address of functional information of the determined format of the image data, and sending electronic mail by attaching image data by one of image standards which the destination device is able to process if a communication error occurs when electronic mail data is communicated with the destination address.

The allegedly admitted prior art also fails to teach determining a format of

image data in correspondence with a destination address by referring to a database, and performing communication with a destination device corresponding to the destination address of functional information of the determined format of the image data, and sending electronic mail by attaching image data by one of image standards which the destination device is able to process if a communication error occurs when electronic mail data is communicated with the destination address.

Seo, Miller and Wolf are also not seen to add anything that, when combined with Bloomfield and/or the allegedly admitted prior art in any permissible combination, would have disclosed or suggested determining a format of image data in correspondence with a destination address by referring to a database, and performing communication with a destination device corresponding to the destination address of functional information of the determined format of the image data, and sending electronic mail by attaching image data by one of image standards which the destination device is able to process if a communication error occurs when electronic mail data is communicated with the destination address.

In view of the foregoing, amendments independent Claims 22, 45 and 49, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to be allowable.

In another related aspect of the invention according to Claims 23, 46 and 50, a user can designate the image format, whereby a determination is made of the format of the image data by referring to a database and the designated format. Then, when email is communicated, if the destination device is able to process the determined format, the functional information is not communicated.

Referring specifically to the claims, Claim 23 is a communication apparatus comprising communicating means for communicating electronic mail data with a

destination address by connecting to the Internet, designation means for designating an image format, including a resolution, of image data to be attached to the electronic mail data, determination means for determining an image format corresponding to the destination address by referring to a database and the designated image format, communication means for communicating with a destination device corresponding to the destination address functional information of the determined image format before the communication of the electronic mail data with the destination device is performed, and control means for controlling the communication means so as not to perform communication of the functional information if the determined image format is an image format that the destination device is able to process.

Claims 46 and 50 are computer-readable medium and method claims, respectively, that substantially correspond to Claim 23.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 23, 46 and 50, and in particular, none of Bloomfield, the allegedly admitted prior art, Seo, Miller or Wolf, are seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of determining an image format corresponding to a destination address by referring to a database and a designated image format, communicating with a destination device corresponding to the destination address of functional information of the determined image format before the communication of the electronic mail data with the destination device is performed, and controlling the communication so as not to perform communication of the functional information if the determined image format is an image format that the destination device is able to process.

In yet another related aspect of the invention according to Claims 24 and 47, when electronic mail data having image data attached is to be communicated over the

Internet, electronic mail concerning pieces of functional information, which is functional information for a facsimile defined by a Tagged Image File Format (TIFF), pertaining to the same process, electronic mail of a text, and electronic mail concerning delivery confirmation, are related to each other. As a result, the information can be maintained in a database as related information.

With specific reference to the claims, Claim 24 is a communication apparatus comprising communicating means for communicating electronic mail data with a destination address by connecting to the Internet, determination means for determining a format of image data corresponding to the destination address by referring to a database, communication means for performing communication with a destination device corresponding to the destination address of functional information of the format of image data determined by the determination means before the communication of the electronic email data with the destination device is performed, and an identifier for relating pieces of electronic mail concerning pieces of functional information pertaining to the same process to each other, when the first communicating means is to communicate electronic mail data having image data attached.

Claim 47 is a computer-readable medium claim that substantially corresponds to Claim 24.

The applied art, alone or in any permissible combination, is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 24 and 47, and in particular, none of Bloomfield, the allegedly admitted prior art, Seo, Miller or Wolf, are seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of determining a format of image data corresponding to a destination address by referring to a database, performing communication with a destination device corresponding to the destination address of functional information of

the determined format of image data before the communication of the electronic email data with the destination device is performed, and relating pieces of electronic mail concerning pieces of functional information pertaining to the same process to each other, when electronic mail data having image data attached is to be communicated.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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